

David Charles'

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AUGUST 25, 1920

RED SOX SMOTHER ST. LOUIS IN OPENER

Slug Out 11-1 Win - Fusillade of hits in Eighth - Myers Pitches Great Game - Support Air Tight

By James C. O'Leary, The Boston Globe

The Red Sox, who just now are starting a fight with the Browns for a first division berth, in the opening game of the series at Fenway Park yesterday, bringing them right on the heels of St. Louis.

Elmer Myers, who came to Boston via the waiver route from Cleveland, and is proving a valuable pitcher for the Boston club, was in splendid form, allowing only seven hits. Two of these came in the fourth frame, but with negative results, and three of them, one a double by Jacobson, were made in the fifth and developed the only run scored by the visitors.

George Sisler, the leading batsman of the league, was topped dead. He struck out the first time up and did not hit a ball outside the diamond in the other three times he came to bat.

Sothoron who was opposed to Myers in the box had poor control. After the Boston boys had gained a lead of 3 to 1, and it was apparent that his teammates could do nothing against Myers, he did not extend himself. In the eighth inning the Red Sox sprung a batting rally on him, and piled up seven runs on five singles, a double and a triple, every one of the seven hits being clean cut and sizzling.

The Red Sox gave Myers splendid support, Scott, McInnis, Vitt and Brady pulling off some marvelous plays, the most conspicuous being a jumping one-handed catch by the Boston shortstop of Severeid's liner, with runners on second and third.

Sisler and Gedeon fielded well for the visitors, but it was a fumble by the latter on an easy chance that helped the Red Sox to one of their two runs in the fifth.

Sothoron's Downfall

It was in this frame that Sothoron first began to show lack of control. With one out, Brady singled to center, and Myers was passed. Hooper scored Brady with a single to left center, but was forced at second by Vitt. Menosky grounded to Gedeon, for what should have been the third out, but Gedeon juggled the ball, dropped it, and then gave it a little boot, just as Myers crossed the plate with the second run of the inning.

In the seventh, with two down, Sothoron passed Hooper,

Vitt and Menosky in successfully, and Hendryx scored the first two with a single to center.

This cooked Sothoron's goose, and in the next frame everybody took a slam at him, Schang and Scott coming up twice.

Schang opened with a hot grounder to Gedeon's left, which broke through his hands for a single. Scott struck out. Brady was hit by a pitched ball. Myers singled, scoring Schang. Then the massacre started in earnest. Hooper singled, scoring Brady; Vitt singled, putting Myers over; Menosky doubled to right, scoring Hooper and Vitt, and counted himself on Hendryx's triple to right. Tim registered on a single to left by McInnis. Schang, up for the second time, forced McInnis, and Schang fouled out.

Visitors Stopped Short

The only run made by the visitors was in the fifth, on singles by Sothoron and Gedeon, and a double by Jacobson.

Oscar Vitt stopped what might have been a flash by the visitors in the third inning. By a great one-hand play he pulled down a highbouncer hit by Jacobson, which was labelled a double, and a fast double play, McInnis to Scott, and back to McInnis, checked another flash in the eighth.

Slugging Them Out

That short-cropped haircut must have improved Harry Hooper's batting eye. Three hits in four chances is a pretty fair day's work.

The eighth was a tumultuous frame. Six hits in succession, including a double and a triple, is turning 'em out fast. Some of them might fit in well today.

Sothoron had an involuntary assist in the seventh, which, incidentally, robbed McInnis of a hit. "Stuffey" bounced one off his shin, which caromed over to Sisler for a perfect assist.

But for a great play by Oscar Vitt, Jacobson would have had a perfect batting average. He made three of the seven hits scored by the Browns against Myers. He also had a busy day in centerfield.

Billings, who went in to bat in place of Sothoron in the ninth, popped up a fly which Scotty gathered in in short leftfield for the final play of the game.

Waite Hoyt will probably pitch for the Red Sox in today's game, and Manager Jimmy Burke will use Weilman.

MAY 30, 1985

RED SOX RUN DOWN TWINS IN 11TH, 8-7

By Ron Borges, The Boston Globe

The only thing missing at Fenway Park last night was Rod Serling's voice.

"Somewhere between the height of man's knowledge and the pit of his fears lies that area we call the imagination . . . You have just entered the Twilight Zone," Serling used to say to describe things like the happenings between the Red Sox and the Minnesota Twins at Fenway Park.

In the end, the Sox walked away with an 11-inning, 8-7 victory and a three- game sweep of the Twins, but it was the manner in which they did it that required Serling's slightly demented viewpoint to add some understanding.

"It did seem like things were moving in slow motion," admitted Glenn Hoffman not long after he scored the winning run with a head- first slide past Twins' catcher Tim Laudner.

With the game tied, reliever Ron Davis hit both Hoffman and Dwight Evans before giving up a single to center by Jim Rice.

As Kirby Puckett was fielding it, Hoffman hit third and never broke stride. A good throw would have cut him down, but Puckett's throw hit the back of the pitcher's mound and bounced up the third- base line.

"When I saw Laudner moving left I dove inside him," Hoffman said.

He eluded Laudner's tag but he also eluded home plate, landing spread- eagled beyond it as Laudner dove at him. What happened next was open to debate.

"I never felt a thing," Hoffman said. "He didn't get me. But I wasn't sure I could get up in time to crawl back and tag the plate."

Laudner, however, wasn't sure that should have mattered.

"I tagged his right thigh on the way by," Laudner said. "There's no doubt."

Perhaps not in his mind, but there was also no doubt in the mind of home plate umpire Dale Ford.

"Two people see the same play in different ways," said Davis (1- 5), who took this entire matter rather calmly, which was really the only way one could take all that he had seen.

For example, Minnesota blew leads of 3-0, 5-1 and 7-5 as starter Mike Smithson continued to impersonate Harry Houdini. The only difference is that instead of making an elephant disappear, he makes leads disappear.

Smithson, who became one of the few pitchers in history to last seven innings while giving up seven runs, 11 hits, two walks and two homers, upped his ERA over his past six starts to a robust 7.96.

In the process, he has allowed 33 runs and 52 hits in his past 37 1/3 innings and blown games in which he led, 8-0, once and 5-1 twice.

"I pitched as well as I have all year," Smithson said. "I gave up two 280-foot homers."

The two were a three-run line drive by Bill Buckner in the fifth that tied the game at 5-5 when the ball barely slipped over the fence in the right-field corner, and a looping one by Rich Gedman to the same spot in the sixth that cut a new Twins' lead to 7-6.

Smithson was able to wander so long in the wilderness only

because the first outing of Bobby Ojeda in the Red Sox starting rotation this year lasted less than three innings.

After two months as a short reliever, Ojeda pitched like a short starter, allowing eight hits and five runs (only three earned) before departing with a 5-1 deficit in the third.

His problems began in the second when Minnesota scored three times. Laudner singled with one out and Ron Washington followed with a single that turned into a two-base error when it skipped between the legs of center fielder Tony Armas, scoring Laudner.

Washington scored when Puckett tripled to dead center and Puckett then trotted home after Mickey Hatcher followed with a single.

Smithson gave one back in the second when Mike Easler singled and scored on Rich Gedman's triple, but his teammates handed him two more in the third when Ojeda really put the O-heat on himself.

He gave up a leadoff triple to Tom Brunansky, hit Gary Gaetti and then scooped up a swinging bunt by Greg Gagne and threw it into right field. That brought Brunansky in with the fourth run and sent Ojeda to the clubhouse.

Mike Trujillo came on to slam the door, but he couldn't do it without catching Ojeda's toe when Gaetti scored on a groundout to second to make it 5-1.

Smithson sailed along through fifth while the Sox tied the game with a four-run outburst that included Buckner's shot.

But back came the Twins, a team obviously not content to lose their eighth in a row without a fight.

Trujillo had not allowed a ball out of the infield for three innings, but he couldn't keep one in in the sixth as Minnesota added two more runs.

Laudner and Washington singled and Dave Meier reached on Boggs' error. Bob Stanley replaced Trujillo, but Puckett greeted him with an opposite-field double to right. Dwight Evans threw to third (for reasons only he and Serling will understand), thus allowing two runs to score.

"I was really mad about that hit," said Stanley (1-2). "Puckett was late on the ball and blooped it to right. The way it worked out, maybe I should get like that more often."

Bad luck was hardly an issue by now, however, as Boston tied the game in the eighth when Easler singled and pinch runner Steve Lyons scored on Barrett's single, thus setting the stage for Hoffman's slow-motion slide and the Twins' slow-motion nose-dive.

The Red Sox announced following last night's game that infielder Dave Stapleton would be sent to Pawtucket for 20 days to rehabilitate his troublesome knee. Stapleton was eligible to come off the disabled list today. He will join the PawSox in Richmond, Va., tomorrow.

Boston Vintage Sports Flashback

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JULY 28, 1942

SISTI'S DOUBLE SETS UP 4-3 BRAVES WIN

Slow Fielding in 9th Spoils Shutout for Big Johnny Sain

By Harold Kaese, The Boston Globe

Big Johnny Sain, who pitched eight scoreless innings in his first major league start, was short-changed at the end, but the Braves took their series opener from the Pirates, 4-2, at Braves Field yesterday, winning the hard way and the thrilling way before a sparse crowd of 2534 fans, 1527 of whom paid for the privilege of being there.

Sain retired in the ninth, when the Pirates made three runs off him to tie the score, after having pitched 16 consecutive scoreless innings. His successor, Lou Tost, was credited with his ninth victory of the season. He made only five pitches, four of which were intentional balls.

Fumble is Costly

The Braves won in the last of the ninth from Lloyd Dietz, when Bob Elliott at third fumbled Nanny Fernandez' potential double-play grounder with bases full and one out. Sibby Sisti, who had started the inning with a double, scored while ewlliott saved himself an error by stepping on third for a force play, instead of heaving the ball home in a desperate attempt to cut off the winning run.

Sain was short-changed because he would have scored a 3-0 shutout if Braves outfielders had been fleeter on foot in the ninth. He allowed only three hits in the first eight innings, and didn't pass anyone until the eighth, when he showed he was tiring by walking two men.

He passed Johnny Barrett to start the ninth, but got Wasdell on a pop to Miller. Elliott raised a fly that fell a few feet in fair territory, just out of Waner's reach. A faster outfielder would have caught the ball. Sain contributed by hitting Elbie Fletcher to fill the bases.

DiMaggio's fly to Holmes in center scored Barrett. Sain the passed Stewart, a pinch hitter, to fill the bases again. With two strikes and one ball on Al Lopez, the former Braves catcher, lobbed a double into right-center to tie the score. That's when Sain retired, and Tost came in to walk Van Robays purposely and get Coscart on a grounder to Miller.

Dietz, fourth Pittsburg hurler, yielded a double to Sisti on his first pitch in the ninth, a line drive that DiMaggio dropkicked in left-center. An intentional pass to Lombardi, Holmes' sacrifice, and another intentional pass to Waner set the stage for Elliott's boot.

Bounces Off Glove

Fernandez hit a medium-speed grounder near the bag, but the converted outfielder got the ball on a short hop and it bounced off his glove. He recovered, but instead of gambling on getting Sisti, whom he almost certainly would have missed, he stepped on third for a force play, which left the pirates still one out to go.

The Braves scored first off Max Butcher, Pirates' starter, in

the sixth, when Fernandez singled to center, Kluttz beat out a surprise bunt to third, West singled to deep center and Miller lined out to Wasdall against the fence in left.

A formr warrior, John Lanning, gave up two runs in the eighth, walking Waner, yielding a single to Fernandez, and then being smacked for a two-run double to left-center by Kluttz.

WARRIOR WARWHOOPS

Jim Tobin (8-14) and Al Javery (6-12) will pitch today's double-header against Rip Sewell (10-9) and Ken Heintzelman, Bob Klinger, or John Gornicki. . . Paul Waner will be presented a plaque from the National League between games, a tribute to his feat of making 3000 hits. . . Although Lombardi pinch hit yesterday, his injured finger is much too sore for him to try catching.

* * *

After singling his first time up, Miller lined out three times. . . He made a great play on Wasdell's grounder to save Sain a no-hitter through four innings, but even Miller couldn't keep Elliott from getting an infield hit in the fifth. . . . the pirates had a great chance to score here when Fletcher's single sent Elliott to third with none out, but DiMaggio pushed his squeeze bunt right at Sain. Then Elliott was doubled at the plate after Holmes caught Gustine's fly a few yards in back of second.

JUNE 8, 1949

BRAVES WIN IN 15th ON RUSSELL'S HIT

By Hy Hurwitz, The Boston Globe

Jim Russell smashed a hit off the right center field fence at 12:39 this morning - and the Braves defeated the Cincinnati Reds, 8 to 7, in 15 innings.

The bases were loaded with none out when Russell delivered to break up the longest game of the season.

This four-hour and nine-minute marathon found Nelson potter winning bhis fifth decision of the season as he hurled nine and a third innings of terrific emergency baseball. It left the Braves in third place, a half-game behind the pace-making Brooklyn Dodgers.

Milton's Elbie Fletcher started the winning drive in the 15th. He struck the bottom of the barrier in right center for a double. Alvin Dark scratched a single off Claude Corbitt's glove to move Fletcher to third. At this stage, Manager Bucky Walters waved Howie Fox in from the frosty precincts of the visiting bullpen.

Fox issued an intentional pass to load the bases. Russell, whose two-run double had highlighted a six-run second inning for the Braves, fouled off the first pitch. Then Jim teed off on it. The outfield had closed in. Neither Baumholtz nor Wyrastek made an attempt to catch the ball which bounced off the billboard.

Braves Get Six in Second

The Reds picked up two runs against Johnny Sain on some

loose fielding in the first inning but these runs appeared insignificant. The Braves shelled Ken Raffensberger for six runs in the second. Grady Hatton, whose fluke triple started Sain's misery in the first, gave the Braves a lift in the second by booting Clint Conatser's grounder.

Before Herman Wehmeier could be called in from the bullpen, the Braves had four runs across. Wehmeier walked Bob Elliott and Russell doubled to left center. Sain had a 6-2 lead. It swelled to 7-2 in the third on a walk to Phil Masi, a sacrifice and Eddie Stanky's single. But the Braves couldn't connect with home plate again until the 15th.

The Reds pecked away at Sain. They made two two runs in the fifth and they chased Johnny off the spot in the sixth with another two-run assault. Potter was brought in and he fanned Hank Sauer, the first of Potter's eight strikeout victories.

An error by Dark paved the way for the Reds' tying run in the seventh. After his boot Stallcup singled and Ray Mueller's single scored Ted Kluszewski.

HIT AND RUN

WORKOUTS - Braves Field was cluttered with "phenoms" from all over the country yesterday afternoon and evening. . . One of the most sought after players - Eddie Sobozak - of Michigan State - worked out during the regular Braves practice, along with a collegiate teammate, Bob Krestel, a right-handed pitcher. . . Sobozak was declared ineligible by Big ten authorities last week as he played in the northern League during the past two summers. . . He's a rangy outfielder, right-handed all the way, who impressed Manager Billy Southworth during a workout at Wrigley Field two weeks ago. . . Eddie claims that he has not discussed signing a Braves contract but will work out here for the next few days. . . Sobozak said that since he had been declared ineligible, the Red Sox, White Sox, Detroit Tigers and Chicago Cubs have approached him about joining their respective organizations. . . He states that he'd prefer to join the Braves chain, if the price is right. . . Scout Jack Ogden brought a schoolboy sensation from Newmanstown, Penn., named Dick Strickler. . . "He's a rugged 17-year-old southpaw pitcher, who is built like a brick barn," stated Ogden, "and he can fire the ball."

CONFIDENCE. . . Manager Bucky Walters passed off the Tuesday night incident in which philosophically Frank Baumholtz caught Alvin Dark's foul in right field and permitted the winning run to score after the catch. . . "Everyone makes mistakes," said Walters. "Baumholtz is still my right fielder." . . Frank showed his appreciation in the first inning, he doubled off the right field foul pole to drive in the Reds' first run. . . He made a brilliant catch to rob Alvin Dark of a triple in the first.

EARLY START - It wasn't dark when the game began, which may be one reason why Clint Conaster looked amateurish on Grady Hatton's pop fly to left field. . . Conaster ran in, held up his hands as though he were going to catch the ball and it went for a triple. . . When the Braves return home, they doubtless will change their starting hour to 8:45 for night games.

SHORT STUFF - Pres. Lou Perini and general manager John Quinn are in Evansville today attending the big blowout for Bob Coleman, a former Braves manager. . . Bob has been in baseball for 40 years and is currently managing the Boston farm team in Evansville.

WISHES - Manager Bucky Walters would have loved to have been able to use Ewell Blackwell in the clutch this morning. . . But Blacky was confined to his hotel room.

JANUARY 18, 1959

BRUINS WIN

Stasiuk Goals Nip Leafs, 4-3

By Tom Fitzgerald, The Boston Globe

A pair of first period goals by Vic Stasiuk launched the Bruins on the way to a 4-3 victory over Toronto's frequently pesky Maple Leafs last night at the Garden.

A crowd of 13,698 applauded this latest sound effect which brought the B's through four games without a loss (two wins, two ties), and increased their margin over the clubs below them in the standing.

Boston has a three-point edge over fifth-place Detroit and five over Toronto in the cellar.

Stasiuk's pair, his 17th and 18th, were sandwiched around a debatable effort by Chief Armstrong, but Dutch Reibel boosted the count to 3 to 1 by the end of the first.

After a scoreless second period, Dough Mohns got what proved the winning tally on a pretty play with Don McKenney early in the third.

The Bruins really needed that because subsequently Tim Horton powdered home a long screener and Ron Stewart sneaked around the net for a successful back-hander four seconds from the finish while the B's had a manpower advantage.

Larry Regan who was claimed from the Bruins on waivers two weeks ago set up the first two Toronto goals.

The first two Boston scores negotiated on the power play with the Leafs shorthanded, a notable improvement in this department over the earlier stages of the season.

The first of these, with Horton out at 10:06 was a fine passing play. Larry Hillman relayed up from the right point to Johnny Bucyk and Johnny sent the plug into Stasiuk who converted from close on top of Ed Chadwick.

Armstrong's goal for Toronto was hotly protested by Don Simmons on the ground that the big Toronto captain was in the crease when the disk deflected off him into the nets.

This fired up the Bruins and it paid off at 15:50 shortly after Horton departed for another penalty sentence. This time the play went from Bucyk to Bronco Horvath, whose short glanced off Stasiuk's skate and over the line.

Reibel had just come over the fence as an emergency fill-in for Jerry Toppazzini (skate trouble) when he broke through. Rookie Larry Leach and Guy Gendron made this play on which Dutch hoisted a backhand past Chadwick.

Mohns scored for the first time since returning from his lay-off with a broken jaw at 5:24 in the third. Doug originally sent McKenney up the ice, with Bob Baun back alone, Slip played it smart.

The center held the puck until Mohns came barreling up to collect and covert with a low smash.

This was a brisk, fast game with the two goalies performing in outstanding fashion, Simmons with 33 saves and Chadwick with 37.

NOVEMBER 7, 1981

BRUINS PUT NORDIQUES IN PLACE, 10-1

By Francis Francis Rosa, The Boston Globe

QUEBEC - There are times in hockey when the coach's approach to a critical game has a spontaneous effect on his team. Gerry Cheevers of the Bruins came into last night's game here talking about "first place, first place," even though it was only Nov. 7. And the Bruins played as though it were April 4.

Coach Michel Bergeron of Quebec, on the other hand, kept saying, "It's too early to think of this as a first-place game."

And so Boston, scoring in every possible way - on the power play, shorthanded, even-sides and even off an opponent's stick, and with nine different players scoring - posted a rollicking 10-1 victory over the Nordiques in what was the biggest Bruins' victory on the road since Feb. 27, 1969, when they defeated Oakland, 9-0.

And yes, the Bruins are in first place in the Adams Division.

The pregame outlook had Quebec's power play up against Boston's penalty killing. The Quebec power play had gone from a 19-percent efficiency two weeks ago to 28 percent, "because we scored on 50 percent of our power plays over the last three games," said coach Michel Bergeron of Quebec. And the Boston penalty killers had held the opponents scoreless on 11 straight chances and 35 of the last 39.

So, in the first period the Bruins' penalty killers did their job, shutting out the Nordiques on two power-play chances, and the Boston power play scored on both its opportunities. That gave the Bruins a 2-1 first-period lead on merely five shots.

The Nordiques scored first, Pierre Lacroix getting the goal when he skated out of the right circle, around a pair of stationary Boston players and to the top of the crease near the right post. He lifted a shot past Marco Baron's left side.

Brad Park tied the game with a power-play goal in the middle of the period. Mike O'Connell passed the puck off the left point to McNab in the right circle. Park broke into the slot from the right point and McNab laid a perfect pass on his stick. Park whipped a 12-footer past goalie Danny Bouchard's left.

The Bruins' next power play was only four seconds old when McNab scored his 250th career goal. Coach Gerry Cheevers sent Pederson in for the faceoff - a move he has been making more and more frequently - after Jean Hamel had gone to the penalty box for hooking Stan Jonathan.

Pederson won the faceoff and the puck went from him to Wayne Cashman to Park in the middle up at the blue line. McNab was just below the middle of the right circle when he took Park's pass and fired the puck through Bouchard's legs, and then quickly retrieved it.

Bergeron had tried to alert his players to the key role the Boston defensemen play, especially on the power play. "Their defensemen can all carry the puck and they're all offensive defensemen. We have to cover their defensemen on the power play," he said, "and if we don't we're in trouble." The failure to cover the defensemen led to both of Boston's power play goals.

The Bruins continued on from there into a second period made up of two more Boston goals and several pass interceptions at center ice of Quebec's attempts to move out of its defensive

zone. It was one such interception that led to Boston's fourth goal. Cashman made the interception and turned Lacroix into a two-time loser on the same play. First Cashman picked off a Lacroix pass just outside the Quebec blue line and came in toward the goal on the left wing. He managed to get off a shot that Bouchard blocked quite easily. With two of his own players there Bouchard just pushed the puck toward the top of the crease. Lacroix was right there and the puck went off his stick and into the Quebec goal. That goal took something out of the Nordiques and the Bruins dominated the rest of the period, pushing their lead to 4-1 on a goal by Keith Crowder, and outshooting Quebec, 11-5.

Cashman and Crowder did a lot of hard work along the right boards, with Cashman finally moving behind the goal line with the puck. As he neared the back of the goal he passed the puck to Crowder, who was almost skating parallel to Cashman. He went to the corner to Bouchard's left with his shot when the Nordiques' goalie went to his knees.

"Boston's style has changed," said Bergeron. "They always had a couple of strong-arm guys on the bench ready to throw into the game to mix things up. I don't mean goons. I mean physical players. They have young players and they're skating strongly, but they still have the workers and Cashman is one of them."

The Bruins exploded for six third-period goals against the demoralized Nordiques. Two of the goals, by Mike Gillis and Barry Pederson came 28 seconds apart. Then Middleton scored Boston's third power play goal of the game; O'Reilly added a shorthanded goal, Steve Kasper scored and Gillis got his second of the game to finish the scoring for the Bruins.

It's never too early to think first place.

FEBRUARY 25, 1962

CELTICS CLINCH SIXTH STRAIGHT EAST CROWN IN ROW

**Late Surge Edges Nats, Auerbach Salutes
Squad**

By Clif Keane, The Boston Globe

SYRACUSE - The Boston Celtics clinched their sixth straight Eastern Division NBA crown yesterday with a thrilling come-from-behind victory over the Syracuse Nationals.

Bill Russell has 23 points, Bob Cousy 20 and Tommy Heinsohn 18 in a game that saw the Celts barely nip the injury-riddled nats, 110-106, at War Memorial Stadium.

A happy Red Auerbach, noozing confidence in a telephone interview after the game, was looking forward to the playoffs.

"Excluding injuries to this team in the remaining games I'd say we are going into the playoffs in better shape than last year.

"We're faster, have that much more experience.

"I like this ball club of mine, and I'm prouder'n hell of them.

"I don't make predictions on playoffs," said the coach. "A short series is unpredictable, and something can happen physically to a few men and you're in trouble.

"But if nothing happens to us - well."

The team hadn't learned that the Philadelphia Warriors had lost to the New York Knickerbockers clinching the championship. And even when the 11 players do get word of it, there will be no celebration.

"No, no parties," said Auerbach. "If this thing had gone down to the finish, with us leading by a game or two, then maybe there would have been some fun.

"But we've had a good lead for over a month now, and it was more or less expected," said Auerbach. "We're happy, get that straight, but it was only a matter of time for us."

"And there's another item," said Auerbach. "We have to stay ahead of Los Angeles in the other division. We have to beat them percentage-wise to have the advantage of the home court if we meet them in the finals.

"So things aren't all over yet," he said.

Of his club, at the moment Auerbach felt it was in high gear, running better than ever, save for a knee injury to Sam Jones.

"We're playing real good," said Auerbach. "I like this club. It can move that basketball.

"But still no predictions," he said.

Of the team's two wins, Saturday and yesterday, against the Warriors and Nats, Auerbach felt the team played good defensive ball even with the injury to Sam and a few others nursing slighter ailments.

"In Philadelphia, well, the Warriors just had a bad night," he said. "The big guy (Chamberlain) was off, and so were the rest. We played them pretty tight, that probably had a lot to do with it.

"Today," he said, "we were behind and came back in the last period. Johnny Kerr had a jam with referee Billy Smith and got kicked out of the game (Kerr apparently thought he had stolen a ball from K.C. Jones and when Smith tootled Kerr flung his elbow pad and said something awful to Billy and got two technicals and automatic expulsion. So we caught them in the last few minutes and stayed ahead."

MARCH 12, 1982

CELTICS GET PAST NETS, 113-109

By Bob Ryan, The Boston Globe

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. - All in all, it wasn't a bad little show.

A record Nets' franchise crowd of 19,367 almost went home in ecstasy. They almost saw their improving team walk off with the victory that would have made their season. But you know what they say about "close" and its relation to horseshoes.

"Almost" wasn't good enough, not when the world champion Boston Celtics respond to losing a 19-point lead by scoring on their final six possessions en route to a 113-109 triumph.

The game wasn't decided until Robert Parish hauled in the rebound of an Albert King three-pointer with 18 seconds left, or until the Big Man sank one of two foul shots two seconds later to put the Celtics ahead, 111-107. Two M.L. Carr fouls with seven seconds left (following another missed three-pointer) and a Ray Williams buzzer-beating spread buster created the final score.

But, oh, how the infant joint was jumpin' back at the 2:49 mark of the final period, back when Foots Walker, who had

stolen a Parish dribble, stuck in an acrobatic lefthanded driving scoop shot to provide the Nets with a 101-100 advantage, their first lead since 18-17. That basket capped a nice second-half comeback that had its origins in a spectacular run of 16 unanswered third-period points in the brief span of 3:49, turning a 74-57 Boston lead into a 74-73 state of affairs.

"The problem," Bill Fitch would later explain, "was that we played careless and came up with four no-brainers' in a row. We played better after that, but they smelled the blood and played the Count Dracula role."

But the Nets, having come within a point, couldn't get ahead, although they would have three third-period chances at one down with the ball. The Celtics concluded the third period with an 88-82 lead and, after a Mike O'Koren-inspired Nets' run tied the game at 92 with 8:36 left, Boston again spurted, running off six straight points, the last two coming when Danny Ainge picked off a Buck Williams pass and sailed in for a layup, giving the Celtics a six-point lead with 7:01 remaining.

In the next 4:28, however, the Celtics would only score one basket (a Cedric Maxwell layup from an Ainge baseline dish-off). New Jersey kept coming, until the aforementioned Walker go-ahead hoop with 2:49 to play.

Fitch called time out, and when play resumed the Celtics immediately directed the action at Maxwell. "That," Fitch explained, "is what the defense gave us. They gave us the guy (Bird) to make the pass, and they gave us the board crashers."

Max responded like a thoroughbred, or like the reigning playoff MVP, if you will. First he posted King for a 10-foot baseline facial. When Parish, a fourth-quarter backboard terror, pulled down a Williams corner miss, the Celtics went to Max again, and the Rubber Man drew a foul on a right-to-left drive, sinking one of two for a 103-101 lead.

The crowd erupted as Williams tied the game on a you-gotta-be-kidding lefty baseline drive, but 15 seconds later Maxwell replied with his own beauty, a twisting, two-handed scoop (degree of difficulty: 2.1) that wound up as a three-point play and a 106-103 lead with 1:18 left.

The point swapping continued (Williams free throws and King jumper vs. a Parish short drive on a Bird feed), until Parish missed a jumper at 108-107 and Bird drew a loose ball foul with 24 seconds left on the rebound. Larry stepped up and dropped both shots in for a three-point lead.

"Larry made a great play," said Nets' coach Larry Brown. "He rode our guy out as soon as the shot was taken. That's a big play."

Brown's kids looked as if they would be devoured once the Celtics changed an early 16-9 Jersey lead into a 49-30 Boston advantage via a spectacular 40-14 run that included a little 10-for-10 spurt of Mr. Parish. It was 67-53 at the half, and then 74-57 before the Nets got the early pizzazz back.

It may have been a little too much of a Chiller Theatre for Fitch's taste, but the Nets' comeback had a lot of side effects. It sold tickets, it pumped up the home team and it gave the fans a chance to see the world chempeens play with grace under pressure. That adds up to a good night out, doesn't it?